

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application and reconsideration of the Office Action dated March 10, 2006.

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1, 3-5, 9, 13, 15-18, 20-22, 26, 30-32, 34-37, 39, 41, and 42 will be pending in this application. Claims 2, 6-8, 10-12, 14, 19, 23-25, 27-29, 33, 38, and 40 are canceled herein without prejudice or disclaimer or were previously canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

The following briefly describes the content of this Amendment: (a) independent claim 1 is amended to include the subject matter of dependent claims 6-8; (b) dependent claim 5 is amended consistent with the changes to claim 1 and consistent with original claim 12; (c) claim 9 is amended to depend from claim 1; (d) claim 13 is amended to eliminate a redundant feature now present in amended claim 1; (e) independent claim 15 is amended to include the subject matter of dependent claims 23-25; (f) dependent claim 20 is amended consistent with the changes to claim 15 and consistent with original claim 29; (g) claim 26 is amended to depend from claim 15; (h) claim 32 is amended to eliminate a redundant feature now present in amended claim 15; (i) independent claim 34 is amended consistent with the changes to independent claims 1 and 15; (j) independent claim 39 is amended consistent with the changes to independent claims 1 and 15; (k) new claim 41 corresponds to previous dependent claim 22 written in independent form; and (l) new claim 42 corresponds to previous dependent claim 36 written in independent form. Thus, no new matter is included in this Amendment. Fees for the additional independent claims may be charged to our Deposit Account, Deposit Account No. 19-0733.

In the March 10, 2006, Office Action, the Office indicated that claims 8, 22, 25, and 36 contained patentable subject matter. *See* the Office Action at page 3. Accordingly, by this Amendment, Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the subject matter of claim 8 and its respective parent claims (claims 6 and 7), and Applicants have amended claim 15 to include the subject matter of claim 25 and its respective parent claims (claims 23 and 24). Additionally, Applicants have added new independent claims 41 and 42 based on previous claims 22 and 36 (rewritten in independent form). Therefore, independent claims 1, 15, 41, and 42, as well as their respective dependent claims, stand in condition for immediate allowance.

Applicants further submit that independent claims 34 and 39 (as well as their respective dependent claims) stand in condition for allowance. By this Amendment, Applicants have amended these independent claims in a manner consistent with the changes made to place independent claims 1 and 15 in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicants submit that claims 34 and 39 (and their respective dependent claims, if any) are allowable for the same reasons that make claims 1 and 15 allowable. Allowance of claims 34-37 and 39 is earnestly solicited.

For the reasons described above, Applicants respectfully submit that this Amendment renders moot the various grounds of rejection raised in the March 10, 2006, Office Action. Withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

Nothing in this Amendment should be construed as an admission that Applicants agree with or acquiesce in the various grounds of rejection raised by the Office in the March 10, 2006, Office Action or previous Office Actions. Rather, by this Amendment, Applicants have presented various claim amendments and canceled certain claims in an effort to expedite prosecution and to facilitate the immediate allowance of this application. The claim changes made in this Amendment are presented without prejudice or disclaimer, and Applicants reserve all rights with respect to the originally and/or previously claimed subject matter, including the right to pursue claims of the same or similar scope in the future (*e.g.*, in a continuing application).

If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference or a personal interview will be useful to advance the prosecution of this application and/or to place the application in condition for allowance, she is invited to contact the undersigned attorney.

If any fees are due in connection with this Amendment, such as fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17, or if an extension of time is necessary that is not accounted for in the papers filed with this Amendment, the Commissioner is authorized to debit our Deposit Account No. 19-0733 for any necessary fees, including any necessary extension fees or other fees needed to maintain the pendency of this application.

All rejections having been fully addressed, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for immediate allowance and respectfully solicit prompt notification of the same.

Respectfully submitted,

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